

## **Bob Benze's Comments to the Climate Action Team – October 14, 2008**

My name is Bob Benze and I am an environmental engineer who has advocated the use of leading edge science in environmental policy development. Unfortunately, much of our current policy on climate change lacks scientific credibility and will result in large costs without commensurate benefit to the citizens of Washington. Let me make a few points.

The climate action team is not permitted to consider climate change science. But the science of CO<sub>2</sub> causing global warming is indeed being questioned. Over 31,000 scientists have signed a petition saying they don't believe the observed warming is caused by anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub>. Many of these scientists now believe that solar activity appears more directly linked to global temperatures.

But even if CO<sub>2</sub> is causing climate change, and the IPCC's models are correct that there will be a 4.7 degree F increase in global temperature by the year 2100, there are some important questions not addressed in information presented to Washington state policy makers.

First: Will the actions proposed by the CAT have any impact on the global temperatures predicted by the models? The answer according to most experts is "no" – the numbers are too small. For example, if the Kyoto treaty was fully implemented today, the models tell us that the end result would be to delay the 4.7 degree increase in 2100 by about a week. This is reinforced by correspondence from the university of Washington's Climate Impacts Group which states: "(T)he projected climate changes for the next few decades are essentially independent of our future choices concerning greenhouse gas emissions..."

Second: Would a 4.7 degree increase produce more harm than good? Again, the answer reached by many experts who have studied the wide range of impacts is "no". As in the Medieval Warm Period, the world would actually be a more hospitable place for human beings. For example, for every additional heat-induced death due to a rise in temperature, there will be about five deaths avoided by people who would have otherwise perished due to the colder weather. Most advocacy articles ignore the known positive benefits.

And the actions you are developing don't make economic sense. The Washing Policy Center has published a devastating review of the CAT's recommendations, concluding that "For policy makers, there is no worthwhile guidance in the CAT report. Its cost savings estimates cannot be believed, and it fails to quantify the monetary benefits of reduced carbon emissions. Thus policy-makers are left with no basis on which to judge the merits of the CAT report's recommendations for the mitigation of greenhouse gasses."

Groups of economists and other experts say that spending money to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> is a wasteful, inefficient, and ultimately futile effort. For example, the \$180 billion estimated to fully implement the Kyoto treaty would be far better spent combating diseases, eliminating malnutrition, and eliminating trade barriers. These types of activities would save tens of millions of real people each year -- while reducing CO<sub>2</sub> may potentially save a far smaller number far into a future which is almost impossible to predict.

We are already actually doing well with CO<sub>2</sub>. Several years ago Science Magazine reported that North America currently sequesters more carbon than it produces (1.7 pentagrams sequestered vs. 1.6 emitted). This is due, largely, to reforestation of the farmland taken out of production.

I would encourage you to think about such things when you propose actions that will limit and drive up the cost of energy that fuels our economy – and when you employ policy that takes away people's freedom of mobility, and freedom to live where they want – things we used to take for granted as inalienable rights

Bob Benze  
Silverdale, WA  
(360) 692-0800